GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2738
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2007
INTRODUCING SMART CARD
Hussain Shri Anwar

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has received a proposal for the Eleventh Five Year Plan to introduce smart cards to buy subsidized food grains, cooking gas, kerosene etc;

(b) if, so, the details thereof and action taken thereon; and

(c) the method by which it would safeguard the interest of the poor people particularly in the remote and backward region like North-East ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING(SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN)

(a) & (b): Planning Commission had set up a Working Group on Integrated Smart Card System in the context of formulation of the Eleventh Five Year Plan. The Working Group submitted its Report in January, 2007. The Working Group has, inter-alia, recommended that the Government may initiate steps for the introduction of Integrated Smart Card System for the major entitlement schemes. The Smart Cards can be used by the beneficiaries of the Targeted Public Distribution System, National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Integrated Child Development Services, and other welfare programmes. Planning Commission has sought the views and comments of the concerned Departments on the recommendations contained in the Report of the Working Group.

(c): The introduction of Smart Cards is expected to solve many of the problems, particularly that of targeting errors and spurious beneficiaries, in the implementation of various welfare/subsidy programmes/schemes of the Government. Besides, Smart Cards would help in enhancing the efficiency of delivery of various welfare programmes of the Government. As a consequence, the interest of the poor people in the country, including in the North-East, would be safeguarded in a more effective manner.